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4 March 1964

DCI VIEWS ON NRO MATTERS

- I. If US Government department heads not capable of organizing national reconnaissance operation, they are not competent to do their job.
- II. Problem is deep bureaucratic row --
 - A. CIA has done its part of job with flair, imagination and surprising secrecy.
 - B. AF has made great contribution also. But, at working level, AF has maneuvered to eliminate CIA from the reconnaissance effort.
 - C. Within USAF there is unhappiness that D/NRO is running a line operation which is outside exclusive AF plans and the AF Systems Command.
 - D. AF spokesmen have told contractors not to talk to CIA. This worries the contractors.
- III. CIA also holds views on these bureaucratic aspects. DCI, however, looks at problem as DCI, not as head of CIA.
 - A. As DCI, with his responsibility as intelligence advisor to President, DCI must be satisfied that reconnaissance facilities are operating for maximum intelligence benefits.
 1. Of extreme importance to DCI is developing systems improvements for future.

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B. Collection and analysis of intelligence is a full-time DCI concern--his primary mission. This is not true of SecDef or Chairman, JCS. This primary DCI responsibility cannot be diluted.

1. History of progress in reconnaissance fields shows that the gathering of intelligence has not always been a primary objective of SecDef.
2. Same history shows need for secrecy. CIA shines at this. It is extremely difficult for DOD. Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy were quite conscious of this.
3. CIA compartmentation and flair have built an atmosphere which seems to bring out the best in contractors. This is not always true in DOD projects.
4. CIA has demonstrated flexibility in procurement procedures as contrasted with rigidity in DOD. SecDef has pointed to successful OXCART development at lower costs than unsuccessful, costlier programs such as the B-70.

IV. The history of the U-2 demonstrates CIA flair and imagination.

- A. CIA adopted the J-75 engine for better altitude. USAF did not. CIA had to give two J-75-equipped U-2's to SAC for Cuban reconnaissance.

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- B. CIA equipped its U-2's for aerial refueling. USAF did not do so until quite recently and only three have been so modified.
 - C. CIA put improved ECM equipment aboard U-2's for use when overflying near SAM's. USAF has not.
 - D. CIA has made successful tests for flying from carriers. USAF, for obvious reasons, has not.
- V. Main point is, modifications such as these are undertaken to protect and improve intelligence sources and methods. To the USAF, budget considerations give intelligence aspects a back seat to operational considerations.
- VI. Much can be said for using USAF planes, even sanitized, in reconnaissance operations, but there is a certain sophistication that CIA has acquired in this regard.
- A. CIA gets approvals, within US, and from high authority abroad.
 - B. USAF could probably develop this sophistication, but the recent sudden deployment of a SAC U-2 detachment to the Philippines without approvals very nearly caused a major international incident.
- VII DCI foresees problem with OXCART, which can be detected by the Soviets.
- A. This fact changes the OXCART role from a regular collector to that of a standby vehicle for emergency collection.

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B. Maybe this means the OXCART should be a part of the USAF inventory.

C. DCI has not yet personally resolved this in his mind.

VIII. This, then, takes one to the matter of improving satellites for reconnaissance purposes.

A. History shows that the SAMOS failure would have left the US bereft of a satellite capability.

B. The CIA decision to go black and procure a re-entry vehicle, camera systems, film, etc., has led from a useful capability by stages to improved resolution and a highly trustworthy system.

IX. In future, we must have an ever-improving search system that cuts a wide swath with maximum resolution:

A. We will want to use the search system to pick targets for coverage with a special system of narrow scope and high resolution.

B. It is in matters like this that bureaucratic maneuvering is most intense.

X. DCI is not prepared to relinquish operation of principal assets for intelligence collection to an agency outside his control. Neither is he prepared to remove CIA's "cutting edge" in reconnaissance.

A. Arguments on this score broke Scoville's back and present Wheelon with his headaches.

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- B. Maybe there shouldn't be an NRO. Possibly these tasks could be worked out between various agencies on a case-by-case basis.
1. Another way to tackle the thing is to establish an NRO that has fullest input from both CIA and DOD, while remaining responsive to the DCI's statutory responsibility.
 2. In this respect there was a good deal of soul searching in Washington as to whether there was adequate photography of Cuba in the months leading up to the missile crisis, but nobody in Washington other than the DCI went up on the Hill day after day to explain the situation. If there were to be a sudden surprise development in the USSR, it wouldn't be the D/NRO, the SecDef or the SecState who was responsible for the surprise. It would be the DCI.
- C. Perhaps we can allocate these tasks, while they are in the development stage, with the appropriate agency fully and unilaterally responsible for the development. Then when systems become operational, an operating organization could take it over and run it in response to the requirements of the Chairman of USIB.

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1. In this manner we might provide an official like General Greer with a purchasing organization to keep procurement contracts covert after the system has become operational. The agency responsible for the development phase could be made responsible for future improvements and follow-on systems.

D. Whatever is done must provide for the depth of experience and manpower that exists in the military and for the flexibility and initiative of CIA. This couldn't be done below the level of SecDef and DCI. Below this level, departmental warfare is deep and determined.

XI. DCI never conceived of NRO becoming a line organization. In his view it should be a management organization which would call on the resources of the Air Force, the CIA and maybe NASA and others. It would consist of a small group of people to parcel out assignments, see that the assignments were carried out, and operate under the direction of SecDef and DCI. It hasn't turned out that way.

A. It is a line organization. This is entirely wrong. It should not be administered by an Under Secretary of the Air Force operating within Air Force channels.

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- B. The problems that beset NRO now are dangerous because they are affecting a national intelligence resource of the greatest importance--so much so that it should be beyond any parochial approaches.

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